

A STUDY ON CONSUMER DECISION MAKING STYLES ON PACKED READY TO HEAT AND EAT FOOD PRODUCTS IN BANGALORE CITY

K. ABDUS SAMAD¹ & PUSHKAR NARAYAN SINGH²

¹Director, Jamal Institute of Management Jamal Mohamed College (Autonomous),
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu India

²Part Time Research Scholar, Jamal Institute of Management Jamal Mohamed College (Autonomous),
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu India

ABSTRACT

India has undergone dramatic change in food industry, especially in packed ready to heat and eat food products. The aim of the study is to use the framework of consumer decision making styles towards food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products. The dimensions considered in the study are Perfectionism Consciousness, Brand Consciousness, Novelty Fashion Consciousness, Hedonistic Consciousness, Price Consciousness, Impulsiveness, Confusion Over choice of Brands, Brand loyal orientation towards Consumption and food product involvement In this study 408 samples are collected from selected respondents in selected malls in Bangalore City.

KEYWORDS: Decision Making, Ready to Heat and Eat & Food Product Involvement

Received: May 26, 2017; **Accepted:** Jun 14, 2017; **Published:** Jun 19, 2017; **Paper Id.:** IJBMRJUN20177

INTRODUCTION

The decision making styles and the basic characteristics of decision making styles are central to consumer interest studies. Nowadays, consumers are exposed to abundance of information, advertisements, a variety of goods, social media information, specialized stores, individual brand stores, and have greater preference and choice of purchasing opportunities. Identifying the particular brand and purchasing it has become more complex, when comparing nowadays with yesteryears (Hafstron, 1992; Yasin 2009). Food manufacturers and marketers of food are continuously investing huge money and time in marketing analytics to identify and understand consumers shopping behavior, segmenting the consumers in meaningful segments based on their behavior and targeting them more effectively and efficiently.

INDIA'S BACKGROUND – ECONOMIC CHANGES AND THE RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

India, as one of the BRICs, is now familiar as a fast growing market in the world. Prior to 1992, however, India was a protected economy with minimal growth. High tariffs and other forms of protection created immense barrier to trade and access was restricted to Western imported consumer goods. Most retail stores were family owned and smaller in size. With the exception of a few (small) super bazaars, consumers were not allowed to walk freely inside the stores to examine and compare labels of different brands before making their selection. Instead, consumers approached shops with a predetermined list of items to purchase, which were then pulled out of the bins by the salesperson. There were some regional shopping chains that carried tailored clothes or uncut fabric in different designs and fashions.

Indian consumers, on average, did not have as much disposable income as those in Western countries which clearly impacted their decision making while shopping. As a result, shopping for clothes was generally done during the Indian festival and wedding seasons, but not throughout the year. Moreover, in clothing stores the shopper specified the range of price he/she was interested in spending, and the salesperson brought the selection of clothing to the customer. Browsing for merchandise could not be done so easily as a result. In sum, consumer shopping experiences were circumscribed by various economic and market factors.

The situation, however, changed momentarily in 1991 when a new government mandated radical changes in how the Indian economy would operate. This new government set in motion forces that permitted India to grow its economy at a faster pace and allowed consumers greater choice in products and services. A liberalized economy allowed multinational companies to enter India; these companies adapted their products to fit Indian tastes and preferences. India entered into a new reality in retailing as it became a part of the globalization movement affecting most countries on the planet. Organized retail formats such as malls have also contributed to the spending spree among Indian consumers.

The Indian consumer now enjoys a level of choice that was unavailable 15 years ago. Of most importance, the transformation of India into a consumer marketplace represents a change that is unprecedented in the history of India. As such, it is critical for marketers to develop a better understanding of the Indian consumer in the retail environment and their “journey” since they represent a large buying force in future.

Consumer markets in India present a cheerful future, as the Indian economy is balanced to grow in the range of 7 to 8 percent for the coming years with a corresponding rise in consumer optional and disposable income (Narayanswamy and Zainulbhai, 2007). Indian incomes are also expected to triple over the next two decades (Ablett, 2007). According to McKinsey and Company, discretionary spending by Indian consumers will rise from 52 percent of average household consumption in 2005 to 70 percent in 2025 (Kaplan, 2008). Clearly, consumer retail spending is also likely to follow suit as Indians enjoy the expansion of their economy.

In sum, the description above of the historical India (pre-1992) is in noteworthy contrast to the India of today where the retail environment is becoming much like a developed country. We posit that these dramatic changes have also changed the mindset of Indians in the way they make decisions in the retail environment.

Consumer decision making styles and different topology of shopping styles are investigated by many authors in marketing literature. Namely Consumer decision making styles, Consumer style inventory was tested and employed in number of studies (Sproles and Kendall's (1986), Hafstrom, 1992; Durvasula, 1993; Fan and Xiao, 1998; Hiu, 2001). Consumer decision making is defined as a mental shopping orientation characterizing a consumers approach to making choice. Though many studies investigated Consumer decision making styles and consumer style inventory, still there exists uncertainty between the relationships (Welsey 2006). Many studies were mostly tested product neutral setting and still there is lack of research on consumer decision making styles with respect to food product environment. Many researchers recognized that a consumer may have different styles for each food product category (Bauer 2006). All this supports there is need for research on food related consumer decision making styles.

This study examine the association between demographic variables and decision making styles on packed ready to heat and eat food products. By targeting packed ready to heat and eat food product setting as an empirical testing situation,

the researcher investigate the relationship and association between dimensions of consumer decision making styles with respect to packed ready to heat and eat food products.

In this study few modification were done on Sproles and Kendalls instrument (1986) and apply it for food product context with reference to Packed ready to heat and eat food products in Indian Condition. Many earlier studies concentrated as food products, this study in particular concentrates on packed ready to heat and eat food products. This study will contribute to the consumer decision making styles by identifying the relationship between the dimensions of consumer decision making styles and the association of selected personal profiles like gender, age, monthly income and education qualification. Finally the study will identify the relationship among consumer decision making styles.

This study will make many managerial implications from the result derived from the study. The result will definitely help the food manufacturers and food marketers by identifying food related consumer decision making styles, profiling the consumer styles and targeting the food related consumer decision making style segment still more efficient.

ABOUT RETRO PACKING

India has made lots of progress in agriculture & food sectors since independence in terms of growth in output, yields and processing. It has gone through a green revolution, a white revolution, a yellow revolution and a blue revolution.

The retort processed foods do not require rehydration or cooking and can be consumed straight from the pouch with or without pre-warming, depending upon the requirement of the users and the weather conditions.

Some of the mouth-watering dishes in retort pouches include sooji halwa, upma, chicken curry, mutton curry, fish curry, chicken madras, chicken kurma, rajma masala, palak paneer, dal makhni, mutter paneer, potato-peas, mutter mushroom, vegetable pulav chicken pulav, and mutton pulav, etc.

Ready To and Heat And Eat (RTE OR MRE), Shelf Stable, Retort Sterilized Foods are completely cooked foods packed in airtight containers, which could be preserved at room temperature for a long period of time without the necessity of freezing, cooling and drying.

The thermally-processed retort pouch foods are waterproof, weatherproof and bug proof. The Shelf Life of Ready to Eat Foods is from 1 year to 5 years, depending on the type of packing materials and processing procedures. The size of the processed food market is estimated to be over Rs 110 bn and is growing at 10 to 15% per annum. The Rs 4000-bn food market in India has been growing at the rate of 6.5% a year. The Indian middle class spends an estimated around Rs 700 bn annually on food and groceries alone.

The ready-to-eat segment is growing faster as technology is improving and so is the lifestyle of the people. Thus, Ready to Eat Food is a good project for entrepreneurs to invest. Few Indian Major Players are as under:- Energy Products (India) Ltd. Golden Fries Ltd. Haldiram Indian Snacks Ltd. I T C Ltd. Just Desserts Ltd. Kanaiya Foods (India) Ltd. Kohinoor Foods Ltd. M T R Foods Pvt. Ltd. Mount Shivalik Inds. Ltd. Shivdeep Industries Ltd. Tasty Bite Eatables Ltd. Ushodaya Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. Venkatramana Food Specialities Ltd.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are three approaches in measuring consumer styles in consumer behaviour literature. They are consumer typology approach, psychographic lifestyle, and consumer characteristics approach. Sproles and Kendall, 1986 combines

decision making traits and consumer characteristics approach and developed a instrument to measure consumer decision making styles. In the instrument it is assumes eight decision making styles (1) Perfectionism, (2) Brand consciousness, (3) Novelty-fashion consciousness, (4) Recreational, hedonistic shopping consciousness (5) Price consciousness (6) Impulsiveness (7) “Confusion by over choice, (8) Habitual, brand-loyal purchasing orientation

Majority of the studies tested the instrument in various countries like US, China, the UK, Turkey, Germany, China, India, Greece to establish generality of consumer styles characteristics (Sproles and Kendall, 1986; Durvasula, 1993; Lysonski, 1996; Leo, 2005). Based on their result, the instrument was supported, but still some modifications in the instrument is essential to specific cultural environments like India (Hiu 2001)

Very few studies in India and in other countries explored the relationship between consumer decision making styles and food related life styles. There are studies which explored consumer decision making styles for market segmentation (Walsh 2001; Hiu 2001). In this study an attempt is made to test the relationship between consumer decision making styles and food product involvement along with the respondents selected personal profiles.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Table 1

Sl. No	Dimensions	Definition	Source Adapted
01.	Perfectionism, high-quality consciousnesses	A consumer who searches for the highest quality in products.	Sproles and Kendall, 1986
02.	Brand consciousness	A consumer who buys more expensive, well known brands. This consumer is more likely to believe that a higher price means better quality.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986).
03.	Novelty consciousness	A consumer who is likely to experience excitement and pleasure from seeking out new things. They enjoy being in style, and variety seeking is important to them.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986).
04.	Recreational, hedonistic shopping consciousness	A consumer who enjoys shopping and may shop for sheer fun.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986). (Mitchell and Walsh, 2004; Guiry, 2006; Yasin, 2009; Anic, 2010).
05.	Price consciousness	A consumer who is careful about product prices and value for money. This consumer is more likely to look for sale prices and makes comparisons among the offerings in the market.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986).
06.	Impulsiveness	A consumer who is impulsive, careless about how much they spend, and unconcerned about getting a “good buy”.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986) (Hausman, 2000).
07.	Confusion by over choice	A consumer who feels there is a preponderance of brands and stores from which to choose. They have difficulty making choices due to a feeling of “over choice”.	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986).

08.	Habitual, brand-loyal purchasing orientation	A consumer who is more likely to have favorite brands and stores; they have developed habits in the way they choose these brands and stores	(Sproles and Kendall, 1986). (Anic and Radas, 2006; Kumar and Sarangi, 2008; Anic 2010).
09.	Consumer Decision Making Styles	A mental orientation characterizing a consumer's approach to making choices.	Sproles and Kendall (1986, p. 267)

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the association between selected personal profiles and food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- To examine the relationship between customer decision making styles and food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.

RESEARCH MODEL

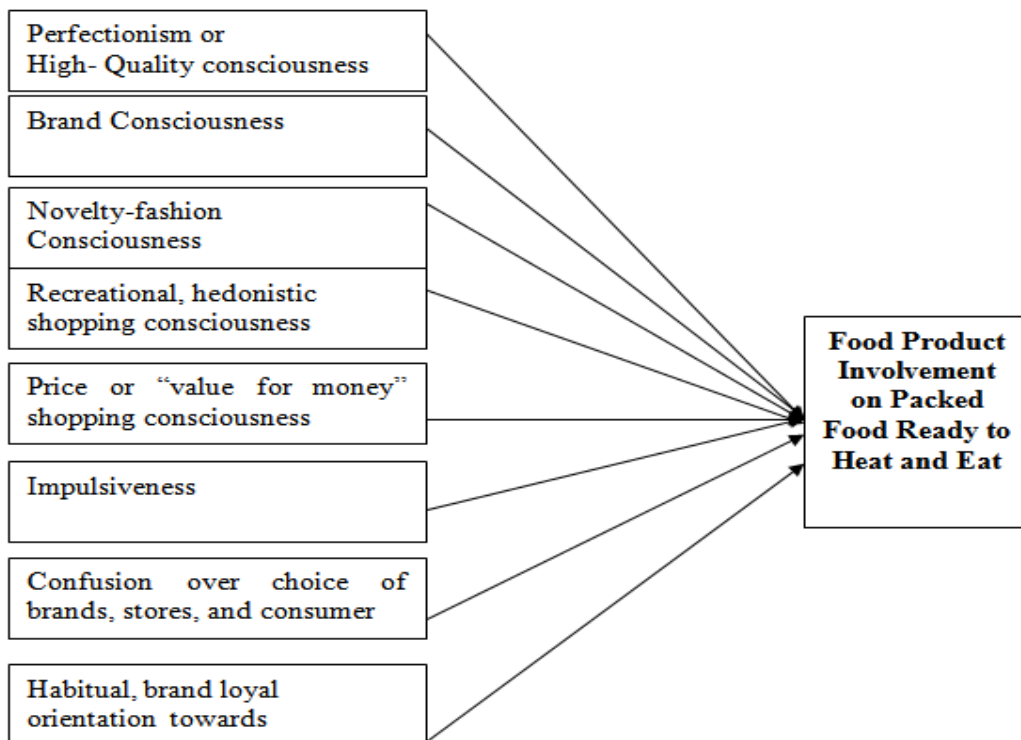


Figure 1

HYPOTHESES

- Perfectionism Consciousness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Brand Consciousness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.

- Novelty Fashion Consciousness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Hedonistic Consciousness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Price Consciousness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Impulsiveness creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Confusion Over choice of Brands creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- Brand loyal orientation towards Consumption creates positive and significant impact in food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.
- There is no association and significant relationship between selected personal profiles and food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.

METHODOLOGY

The study is correlation in nature. Data for this study is collected in selected Malls in Bangalore city. The customers who had already purchased or tasted any brand of packed ready to heat and eat food products or purchased packed ready to heat and eat food products during data collection are considered as the population. The purpose of the study was explained to the potential customers, and who had accepted to participate in the research are given with the questionnaire. Like which 485 questionnaires were distributed, 451 were returned in which 408 were at usable state. Before the data collection process, pre-test was carried out on the sample of 50 consumers in order to test the questionnaire.

MEASURES

To measure decision making styles on packed ready to heat and eat food products researcher applied the widely-used instrument developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986). It consists of 40 items, all measured using five-point rating scales (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The scale consists of eight sub-dimensions as noted previously. The entire dimensions considered for the study met with the required reliability and validity. Zhou (2010) emphasize that many studies have confirmed the existence of the eight decision making styles and have found variations in the styles. The survey also included with selected personal profiles like Age, Gender, Monthly Income and Educational Qualification.

RESULTS

- **Association between Personal Profiles and Food Product Involvement in Packed Ready To Heat and Eat Food Products**

Table 2

Sl. No	Hypotheses	Chi Square Value	df	P Value	Result
01.	There is no association between gender and food product involvement in packed ready to heat and eat food products	1.713	4	.788	No Association
02.	There is no association between educational qualification and food product involvement in packed ready to heat and eat food products	11.926	12	.452	No Association
03.	There is no association between marital status and food product involvement in packed ready to heat and eat food products	4.137	4	.388	No Association

The result of test statistics (Chi Square Test) shows that the selected personal profiles like gender, educational qualification and marital status of the respondents do not have any association with food product involvement in packed ready to heat and eat food products.

- **There is no Significant Relationship between Selected Personal Profiles (Age and Monthly Income) and Food Product Involvement on Packed Ready to Heat and Eat Food Products**

Table 3

Age	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Between Groups	.963	3	.321	.594	.619	No Significant Relationship
Within Groups	218.368	404	.541			
Total	219.331	407				
Monthly Income	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Between Groups	3.777	4	.944	1.765	.135	No Significant Relationship
Within Groups	215.554	403	.535			
Total	219.331	407				

The result of test statistics (ANOVA) shows that the selected personal profiles like Age and Monthly income of the respondents do not have any association with food product involvement in packed ready to heat and eat food products.

- **Inter Relationship between the Dimensions of Food Product Involvement**

Table 4

Dimension	Food Product Involvement
Perfectionism Consciousness	.469**
Brand Consciousness	.477**
Novelty Fashion Consciousness	.356**
Hedonistic Consciousness	.357**
Price Consciousness	.638**
Impulsiveness	.574**
Confusion Over choice of Brands	.358**
Brand loyal orientation towards Consumption	.573**

The above correlation tables shows the strength of relationship between the dimensions Perfectionism Consciousness, Brand Consciousness, Novelty Fashion Consciousness, Hedonistic Consciousness, Price Consciousness, Impulsiveness, Confusion Over choice of Brands, Brand loyal orientation towards Consumption and food product involvement. The dimension food product involvement founds to be highly correlated with Price Consciousness, Impulsiveness and Brand loyal orientation towards Consumption. The dimension food product involvement founds to be moderately correlated with Perfectionism Consciousness and Brand Consciousness. The dimension food product involvement founds to be mildly correlated with Novelty Fashion Consciousness, Hedonistic Consciousness and Confusion Over choice of Brands. All the dimensions are highly significant at (.005) level.

- **Modeling Food Product Involvement**

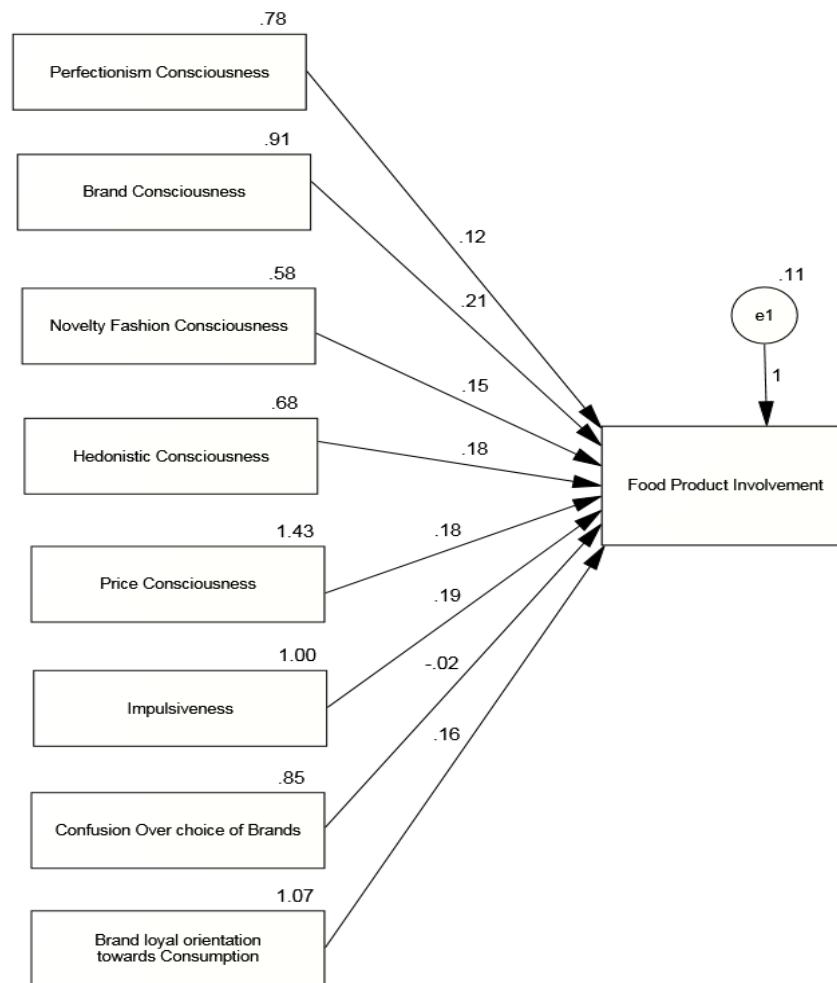


Figure 2

- **Regression Weights**

Table 5

Hypotheses Statements			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Food Product Involvement	<---	Perfectionism Consciousness	123	019	6.551	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Brand Consciousness	209	017	12.070	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Novelty Fashion Consciousness	154	022	7.102	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Hedonistic Consciousness	179	020	8.917	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Price Consciousness	183	014	13.197	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Impulsiveness	193	017	11.677	***
Food Product Involvement	<---	Confusion Over choice of brands	-016	018	-896	.370
Food Product Involvement	<---	Brand loyal orientation towards consumption	164	016	10.228	***

The result of the research model regression weights shows that perfectionism consciousness creates positive impact with food product involvement and it is significant at (.005) level. The dimension brand consciousness creates positive and significant impact on food product involvement. The dimension novelty fashion consciousness founds to create positive impact on food precuts involvement and it is significant at (.005) level. The dimension hedonistic consciousness creates significant and positive impact with food product involvement. Impulsiveness creates positive and significant impact with food product involvement. The dimension confusion over choice of brands creates negative impact with food product involvement and it is not significant (0.005) level. The dimension brand loyalty orientation towards consumption creates positive and significant impact on food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products. The research model attained the required cut off criteria for the model fit.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study show that personal profiles of the respondents do not have any association or significant relationship with food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products. The interrelationship between the study dimensions a food product involvement is significant, positive, moderate and high. Brand Consciousness, Impulsiveness and Price Consciousness are the strongest predictors of food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products. Out of 8 hypotheses formulated in the research model, 7 hypotheses were accepted and one hypothesis is rejected. Confusion Over choice of brands creates negative influence towards food product involvement on packed ready to heat and eat food products.

Overall, the study suggests that Indian shoppers have changed. They are now more brand-conscious and motivated to shop for novelty or leisure, partly as a consequence of their increased buying power. Marketers are urged to act by promoting illustrious brands with a strong focus on quality, taste, easy to prepare, ready to eat and freshness. This can be a lucrative market as consumers seeking quality are prepared to be a price premium. Attractive point-of-sale displays could prove effective when targeting impulsive shoppers, while stocking known brands and products within simply laid-out stores could be the best strategy for consumers who seem to resist change. For price conscious individuals, information about promotions, sales and price reductions is recommended.

Discounting food products on packed ready to heat and eat in one area of the store is another idea, as is the use of loyalty cards. Marketers might also exploit interpersonal influence to persuade shoppers inclined towards this style. Better

understanding of shopping opinion leaders can enable marketers to influence them more in order to impact on the purchase behavior of others.

REFERENCES

1. Anic, I. D. and Radas, S. (2006), "The role of satisfaction and demographic factors in building store loyalty", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 16 No. 108, pp. 66-86.
2. Bauer, H. H., Sauer, N. E. and Becker, C. (2006), "Investigating the relationship between product involvement and consumer decision-making styles", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 5 No. 4, pp. 342-354.
3. Durvasula, S., Lysonski, S. and Andrews, J. C. (1993), "Cross-cultural generalizability of a scale for profiling consumers' decision-making styles", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 55-65.
4. Fan, J. X. and Xiao, J. J. (1998), "Consumer decision-making styles of young-adult Chinese", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 275-294.
5. Hafstrom, J. L., Chae, J. S. and Chung, Y. S. (1992), "Consumer decision-making styles: comparison between United States and Korean young consumers", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 26 No. 1, pp. 146-158.
6. Hiu, A. S. Y., Siu, N. Y. M., Wang, C. C. L. and Chang, L. M. K. (2001), "An investigation of decision-making styles of consumers", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 35 No. 2, pp. 326-345.
7. Hiu, A. S. Y., Siu, N. Y. M., Wang, C. C. L. and Chang, L. M. K. (2001), "An investigation of decision-making styles of consumers", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 35 No. 2, pp. 326-345.
8. Lysonski, S., Durvasula, S. and Zotos, Y. (1996), "Consumer decision-making styles: a multi-country investigation", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 30 No. 12, pp. 10-21.
9. Sproles, G. B. and Kendall, E. L. (1986), "A methodology for profiling consumers' decision-making styles", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 267-279.
10. Walsh, G., Hennig-Thurau, T., Wayne-Mitchell, V. and Wiedmann, K.-P. (2001), "Consumers' decision-making style as a basis for market segmentation", *Journal of Targeting, Measurement & Analysis for Marketing*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 117-131.
11. Yasin, B. (2009), "The role of gender on Turkish consumers' decision-making styles", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 8, pp. 301-308.